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Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Review of the problem of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome in all its aspects

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Letter dated 5 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Ministerial Statement adopted on the occasion of the twenty-fourth annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters on 15 September 2000.

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would highly appreciate it if you could arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 42, 94 (e), 95 (a), 101, 102, 110, 112, 116, 117, 118, 119, 122, 153, 169 and 179.

(*Signed*) Arthur C. I. **Mbenafo**
Ambassador
Chairman of the Group of 77

Annex to the letter dated 5 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ministerial statement adopted at the twenty-fourth annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, New York, 15 September 2000

We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 and China, convened at the twenty-fourth annual meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 15 September 2000,

(a) Reaffirm the Declaration of the South Summit (A/55/74, annex I). We commit ourselves to the speedy and effective implementation of the Havana Programme of Action (A/55/74, annex II) and other decisions adopted by the Summit;

(b) Commend the Government and people of Cuba for hosting the first South Summit, in Havana, from 10 to 14 April 2000. We express our profound gratitude for the excellent arrangements that facilitated the success of the Summit;

(c) Deeply commend the inspiring leadership of the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York and the dedication of the staff of the secretariat in the preparation and organization of the South Summit, and commit ourselves to the speedy and effective implementation of the provisions of the institutional follow-up to the Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit, aimed at upgrading the current structures of the Office of the Chairman of the Group of 77 into a compact executive secretariat in New York, and urge all member States generously to support the ongoing process by meeting in a timely manner their annual financial contributions, as agreed in the Havana Programme of Action;

(d) Express appreciation to our Heads of State and Government for the efforts of the five Heads of State and Government to facilitate the implementation of the other decisions taken by the Summit;

(e) Decide to establish an ad hoc open-ended Working Group of the Group of 77 to discuss modalities for the implementation of and follow-up to the Havana Programme of Action and other decisions. The mandate of the Working Group includes preparation of recommendations on the operationalization of all decisions of the Summit, as well as on the proposals contained in the present and final versions of the report of the five Heads of State and Government. We request the Working Group to submit its report to the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York by February 2001;

(f) Welcome the progress achieved by the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in New York from 24 to 28 July 2000. We fully endorse the proposal for the convening of a meeting of the Preparatory Committee to consider the pending issues in addition to the two sessions initially approved by the General Assembly. We urge the international community to take special initiatives for the least developed countries, particularly in regard to the eradication of poverty, equitable implementation of the Agreements of the World Trade Organization, capacity-building, free access to their exports in the world markets, debt

cancellation, increased official development assistance and incentives for flows of foreign direct investment to the least developed countries;

(g) Reaffirm our commitment to the success of the international intergovernmental high-level event on financing for development to be held in 2001. Members of the Group should continue to actively and effectively participate in the proceedings of the preparatory committee and the regional meetings, as well as the conference itself, with the view to addressing national, international and systemic issues relating to financing for development in a holistic manner. We also call for the active participation of all stakeholders in the said conference so as to ensure enhanced financing for development, as well as to make the international financial system development-oriented, including through the broad-based participation of developing countries;

(h) Emphasize the importance of the five-year review of the Habitat Agenda, to be held in June 2001. We will endeavour to enhance coordination among members of the Group with a view to presenting a unified position in the preparatory process and the special session;

(i) Stress our commitment to the success of the special session in 2001 of the General Assembly on the ten-year review of the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit for Children. The Group should participate fully in the process and special session, with a view to improving the lives of children in developing countries;

(j) Reiterate the importance of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to be held in South Africa from 31 August to 7 September 2001. We commit ourselves to the success of the preparatory process and the Conference, and call upon the international community to contribute towards the achievement of the goals of this conference;

(k) Express our deep concern on the spread of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and other contagious diseases all over the world, particularly in developing countries and sub-Saharan Africa. We welcome the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 54/283 of 5 September 2000, in which the Assembly decided to convene in special session to review and address the problems of HIV/AIDS in a comprehensive manner. We call for the holding of the event at appropriate time, taking into account the urgency of addressing this problem and the need to ensure effective and full participation by all countries;

(l) Express our concern about the lack of progress in the implementation of the principles and commitments made at Rio de Janeiro, particularly in areas such as concessional financial resources and transfer of environmentally sound technologies on concessional terms. We emphasize the need for the preparation for the ten-year follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to focus on identifying challenges and constraints in meeting such commitments, principles and evolving mechanisms and measures to remedy the situation. We stress that this review should not lead to renegotiation of Agenda 21 but to the identification of areas in which further actions are needed and of the source of financing to facilitate their implementation;

(m) Call for an intergovernmental process to consider and develop appropriate guidelines and rules of engagement of the private sector with the United Nations system, including the Global Compact initiative of the Secretary-General;

(n) Reiterate our deep concern over the difficult and chronic financial situation of the United Nations, primarily caused by the failure of a few developed countries, in particular the major contributor, to pay their assessed contributions to the regular budget and peacekeeping budgets in full, on time and without conditions;

(o) Reaffirm that the principle of the "capacity to pay" is the fundamental criterion in the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations and, in this context, stress that developing countries should not be assessed at a rate higher than their capacity to pay as a result of any adjustments in the scale;

(p) Reiterate that the current principles and guidelines for the apportionment of the expenses of peacekeeping operations approved by the General Assembly should constitute the basis for any discussions on the peacekeeping scale;

(q) Underscore that resources proposed by the Secretary-General for the budget of the United Nations should be commensurate with all mandated programmes and activities in order to ensure their full implementation;

(r) Stress that there should be a balanced allocation of time for all administrative and budgetary issues of the United Nations to be considered during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly;

(s) Approve the report of the fifteenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Perez Guerrero Trust Fund (document G-77/AM(XII)/2000/2), which was presented in accordance with the guidelines for the utilization of the Trust Fund, and endorse its recommendations. We commend the leadership of the Chairman of the Committee of Experts for his continued commitment and express our satisfaction with the results achieved by the Trust Fund;

(t) Approve the financial statement of the Group of 77 account for economic cooperation among developing countries (document G-77/AM(XII)/2000/3), as presented by the Chairman of the Group of 77. We appeal to all members of the Group of 77 to contribute generously to the account, in accordance with the decision contained in the Havana Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit held in Havana, from 10 to 14 April 2000.